

## BOOK REVIEW

**Advances of Diabetes Mellitus in East Asia**

edited by G. Mimura, X. Zhu, K. Kida, K. Murakami.  
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The Asian/Pacific region probably contains the largest number of people with diabetes in the world (est. 47.3 million) and may account for just under half of the global burden of diabetes. The growing public health problem of diabetes in this region is reflected in the increasing number and variety of studies from China and Japan. This book contains the proceedings of the 5th China-Japan Symposium on Diabetes Mellitus, held in Xian, China on 5–8 September 1996. In all, 83 papers are presented including plenary lectures on clinical aspects of

molecular genetics studies in Chinese Type 2 DM by K. Xiang; the prevention of Type 1 DM by K. Kida *et al.*; recent trends in treatment of diabetes in Japan by K. Nonaka, and risk factors and prevalence of diabetes in China by the late X. Pan. The other papers, grouped under headings such as epidemiology, aetiology and metabolism, treatment and education etc., cover a diverse range of topics from the educational benefits of diabetes camps in Japan to the effects of four Chinese herbal drugs on insulin resistance in Wistar fatty rats.

Evidence for the dramatic rise of Type 2 DM in China is presented in a paper by X. Pan. In this enormous study conducted in 19 provinces and involving over 220 000 people age 25 years and older, approximately two-thirds of the people with diabetes were newly diagnosed and the overall diabetes prevalence was 2.5 %, nearly three times higher than it was 10 years ago. In China Type 2 DM is associated with higher income levels as well as with the usual factors such as age, BMI, physical inactivity, family history of diabetes, and it appears to be increasing

most rapidly in rural areas. Another interesting and important paper is the 7-year follow-up of the Kumamoto study by H. Kishikawa *et al.*, which continues to demonstrate the benefits of intensive insulin therapy in delaying the onset or slowing the progression of diabetic retinopathy, nephropathy and neuropathy in Japanese insulin-treated Type 2 DM patients.

A standing criticism of published proceedings is that they often appear many months or years after the conference ended and consequently many of the papers which were presented are slightly out-dated. My only major criticism of this book is that many of the papers are only 2 or 3 pages in length including tables and figures, thereby providing little more information than an abstract. Overall, however, I found this book to be very interesting and would recommend it to anyone who is interested in diabetes in Asia.

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